

Community Service News

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SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON THE SMALL COMMUNITY

June 30-July 2, Yellow Springs, Ohio

(See announcement on back cover.)

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Correspondence From the Netherlands

Your printed material has arrived. I have read it with great interest, and I have been surprised by the contents—a surprise due only to lack of information about what is going on in the States, and an all-too-human tendency to assume that the problems you are working on and have to cope with are your problems alone (thinking in national or regional terms). Given this state of mind, it is a surprise to find out that other people—thank heaven, for it is encouraging—are dealing with the same problems.

In spite of analogy and similarity between your country and mine, there are of course differences. The disintegrating forces may be very much the same. The means we have at hand are different to a certain extent, because I feel in this “older” part of the world we can more easily appeal to traditional feelings of pride, remind of special characteristics; and although such elements won’t have enough power to improve the situation itself, they can be a focal point from which movements emanate which are essential for building real communities.

It is difficult to give examples, because in the field of social life and social education you are always faced with a complex of causes and results. But nevertheless I will try to make clear to you what I mean by the preceding general statement.

Even in a comparatively small country like the Netherlands, however densely populated, there are a great many regions or districts where people have a feeling of regional unity and pride. They dislike certain customs of

other geographical groups and keep rather closely together. Such tendencies are rooted mostly in historical development, old economic units, parochial (clerical) units, as such long forgotten, sometimes centuries ago, but still very much alive!

It is sometimes possible to initiate regional community organization in such districts and to appeal to such traditional feelings. With careful handling of such situations you can take out the sting of local chauvinism, avoiding antagonism, and canalizing the group sense on behalf of community building efforts.

Another case is the composition of the population of a city. The city is a melting pot of people and turns out, after a time, a more uniform product. But during this process of amalgamation or adaptation, people try to maintain their individuality and their regional characteristics. They even tend to settle in groups. So in several cities people don’t feel they are citizens of the whole city so much as inhabitants of a certain quarter, often named after ancient villages or hamlets long ago swallowed by the city—think of the boroughs of London, the “quartiers” of Paris. A similar situation exists in Holland—people emigrating to the city from special regions are settling down in special quarters of the city, maintaining a certain feeling of “belonging together,” keeping to certain inborn traditions and customs.

Rotterdam is a typical example of such a city. In Rotterdam a working party has been formed of citizens, so

(Continued on page 62.)

COMMUNITY ABROAD: SOME RECENT REPORTS

THE WORLD-WIDE URBAN TREND AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

During the past year we visited India, Egypt, the Orkney Islands, England, Scotland and southern Ireland, and in some of these countries had opportunities to become acquainted with the trend of migration from rural to urban life. Also we talked with natives of Okinawa, Egypt, and Ireland and with a resident of Peru, all of whom had recent experience in this field. The following comments suggest that the movement in America from rural to urban life is part of a world-wide trend, though the influences which are most active differ from country to country.

The Orkney Islands. The Orkneys have a total area of 375 square miles and a total population of 22,000. There has been a steady decrease from 32,000 in 1860. At present, with an average income of about \$2500 from a small farm averaging only 40 acres, plus housing and most of the family food, the islands constitute one of the most prosperous parts of Britain. The present migration, which approximately balances the natural population increase, is both from the top and from the bottom social strata. With the wholesale mechanization of agriculture, even on farms of 20 acres, farm labor is little needed and has largely left the islands. At the other extreme the better educated are leaving.

From 1932 to 1937, a period least affected by war conditions, of 62 young people who left the Islands to attend university, only 17 returned. The largest of the Islands, called The Mainland, also draws the abler students from the smaller islands. In this same period, of 53 boys and girls who came from the smaller islands to The Mainland to attend secondary school, only 17 returned to their home islands. Those who returned, we were told, were generally considered failures. An instance was given of a very bright girl who insisted on returning to her home island when she had completed secondary school, marrying a young farmer of good quality. Her teachers were deeply grieved that this fine girl should be "lost."

There seem to be several reasons for leaving the islands. One of these is custom. To some extent it is the proper thing to do. Not to leave may be considered an admission of inability to compete with the big world. In earlier generations low income and pressure of population led to migration, and the habit may continue from momentum. Mechanizing of farms and the elimination of farm labor has certainly been a factor in recent years. Changes in technology reduced the need for common labor. Conventional university training, which has prepared for only a few standard professions, draws

others away. A natural desire for a wider range of choice of a mate may be a factor. Then, there is a general craving for a larger range of experience, for more comfortable living conditions, and for all that is pictured in reports from the wide world. There are active and not wholly unsuccessful efforts in the islands to make life so worth while that young people will prefer to remain. We tell of these in a separate article.

Okinawa. South of Japan, Okinawa has a population with its own ethnic and cultural characteristics. The population is about 700,000. Before the war, common school education under Japanese control was standardized and conventional, and had very little relation to the life of the rural people. For the inhabitants of the smaller islands the aim of education was to enable young people to leave for the larger island, and to escape from agriculture into more "honorable" work. Migration was a one-way trend, tending to impoverish the rural culture. The movement was very similar to that in the Orkneys. A different philosophy of education and of life, and improved economic conditions, would seem to be necessary to stabilize the rural population.

Egypt. As one flies over the Delta of the Nile, where a considerable part of the population of Egypt is located, he sees a network of canals, a large number of small mud villages, and a vast number of very small, intensively cultivated farms. Since Egypt has few industries, most of its wealth comes from the soil. These little farms are not as a rule owned by the farmers who operate them, but by wealthy landlords, a large part of whom live in Cairo, and who in many cases seldom see their properties. Managers extract as much as possible from the peasants who cultivate the land. In few countries is there greater contrast between the great poverty of the farmers and the wealth of the landowners.

The peasant farmer in his mud hut gets little out of life but hard labor and an animal existence. If an exceptionally intelligent and thrifty family is able to send one of its children to school, the nearly universal aim is to escape from the drabness, rigor, and poverty of the farm village to the more attractive city, where the new arrival tends to adopt the prevailing cultural pattern. Seldom does a person with an education stay in a village. Thus the villages are constantly robbed of the quality which would make them interesting places to live in, and which might help the villagers to secure some recognition of basic human rights.

India. Over the vast reaches of India, with hundreds of millions of village farmers, for centuries the villager, by taxes, rentals and extortions, has been stripped of nearly everything but a mud hut, a pair of bullocks, a few shreds of clothing, and enough food to keep him from semi-starvation during good seasons. In such a vast country there are exceptions to all generalizations. In some parts of India the villagers are reasonably prosperous and

seldom know starvation, but their exploitation has been fairly universal. The new government is struggling bravely to change this condition, but with difficulty. The fact that no one but a university graduate is acceptable for any "gazetted" government position, and that in general it has been only children of well-to-do families who could attend university, makes this condition all the more difficult to correct.

The Indian villager, having seen nothing else than this way of living, may assume that the only way to escape that fate is to flee the village. Education to him means opportunity to do just that. Very few Indians who leave the village for school ever get back to the village. Heads of agricultural colleges estimated that even of the graduates of their colleges less than two percent returned to farming.

Peru. In Peru, also, the agricultural land is mostly owned by upper-class landlords who live in the city in comparative wealth on the rent of lands farmed by tenants who live in poverty. As life on the land becomes too difficult and too drab, the movement to the city is accelerated. It has gone so far that there is danger that the country will not be self-sufficient in its food supply, although the total population is substantially less than when the region was discovered and conquered by Europeans. At that time everyone lived simply, but want was almost unknown.

Ireland. In Ireland, too, flight from the land and from rural life has resulted in steady shrinking of the amount of land under cultivation. This shrinkage has taken place during the same time that Denmark has been reclaiming poorer land and making it productive. Low income, economic exploitation, and the consequent hard life of the farmer, are given as among the major reasons for this migration.

When such a movement as the world-wide trend of population from rural to urban living occurs in nearly all countries, under a wide variety of conditions, we cannot dismiss it lightly as a mistaken trend, to be reversed by a "back to the land" movement, encouraged by idyllic pictures of life on the land. If this is a world-wide, long-time process, why should we be concerned about it? Why not take it for granted and go about our business? The reason for our concern is that, nearly universal as the trend seems to be, it nevertheless has effects which are fundamentally contrary to human progress and well-being.

The great historical riddle, of why nations and peoples develop great climaxes of culture and then sink back into degeneration and dissolution, so that instead of having a steadily ascending course civilization is a series of brilliant bursts of culture and lapses into oblivion, may be somewhat explained by the persistence of this rural-to-urban trend. The intellectually

superior, the culturally more advanced, and the more aggressive and daring, drawn by the concentration of wealth in city life, flock thither, stimulating each other and producing a flowering of culture largely parasitic on the hard-pressed rural population. Along with this adverse selection there is also some desirable selection, so far as rural life is concerned. The unprincipled, the uncooperative, the unstable, do not thrive in the small community where everyone knows everyone else, and they, too, tend to leave. The remaining rural population, from which the city must be recruited, tends to be industrious, neighborly, honest and stable, but also stolid, unimaginative, of narrow outlook and of rudimentary cultural interests. In almost any community the progressive and stabilizing leadership is supplied by less than twenty percent of the population. If this element leaves, the remaining stable mediocrity will tend to be uninspiringly conservative.

Almost universally city families die out in a few generations. Gradually the rural reserves of exceptional quality are exhausted. Rural leadership and inspiration disappear. Rural families of culture are no longer available for example. Even if the average genetic quality of the rural population has not greatly declined, the tradition of advanced culture which distinguished it from primitive human society, as well as the healthy culture of the primitive, have both departed. Would the ancient Egyptian civilization, the brilliant Arabian civilization, the old Indian civilizations, the classic Greek or the powerful Roman civilization, have disappeared if quality had not disappeared from the rural areas from which their city populations were replenished?

It is of the very essence of civilized society that it shall not drift aimlessly with the "natural" course of events, but that it shall give direction to its own evolution. If we can understand why city life is fatal to the continuance of city families, and if we can see clearly wherein rural life is relatively unattractive the world over, it is possible that we can contribute to the design of types of human association and to conditions of human living, so that the advantages of rural and of urban life may be united. Just as the average duration of human life has doubled in our country in a century as the result of application of intelligent policy, so it seems probable that the duration of great cultures might be extended by intelligent study and action.

We do not as yet have a full answer to this problem, partly because we have not been sufficiently aware of it or concerned with it to give it adequate attention. Perhaps the most desirable attitude is to work actively at those phases of community life which seem so fundamental or so necessary that there is little if any danger of going wrong, and in the meantime to explore the field by detailed research, experimentation, and search of general principles. It is this attitude of search and inquiry and practical undertaking which should characterize the community movement.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN BRITAIN

by ARTHUR E. MORGAN

One is impressed by evidences of the dilemma of England in the desire to escape from large cities into new "garden cities" scattered over the land. The population of England and Wales is 727 per square mile, as compared with 50 per square mile for the United States. The birth rate of England fell from 35 per thousand of the population in 1870 to 15.2 in 1939. Then, as in nearly all of Europe, it increased markedly after the war, and in 1947 reached a peak of 20.8. It is now on the decline, but has not fallen to its former level. The increase in population of the United Kingdom from 1939 to 1949 was about 2,500,000. In view of the fact that by far the larger part of the population is urban, this increase indicates that under some conditions urban population can more than maintain itself by its own birth rate. There is even a suggestion that here an urban population may have become effectively adjusted to its environment.

As one flies over England he sees a great spread of very substantially built small "garden cities" in all directions around London, and to a lesser degree around other cities. When we think of what an exceedingly small part of our country is occupied by cities it is difficult to realize that there is not enough room for garden cities in England. Further extension would infringe on the already inadequate land available for raising food. Since warships cannot longer be counted on to keep open the sea lanes for importing food, England has become very sensitive to the need for saving every available foot of land for farming. Therefore some leading town planners and public authorities are turning away from garden cities to an effort to make the larger towns more attractive. There is effort to save space by narrower streets and smaller lots. One is impressed by the solidity and apparent permanence of British housing. In comparison, an American suburban development of four- to eight-room houses seems fragile and temporary. Present-day England is giving a foretaste of what the world would be like if the total population were ten billion instead of two.

Gandhi is reported to have remarked some years ago that Britain was a parasitic country, and that when the resources of India were no longer available, the Britain of the past could not exist unless it could get its parasitic roots into some other source of sustenance. (This might be prophetic of Marshall Plan aid.) However, that is not the whole story. England was only partly parasitic. A very large part of its sustenance came from authentic industry and agriculture.

One sees in Britain today an honest and heroic struggle to live by its own authentic roots without parasitism. The struggle is desperate, for in the past the expansion of British life has been all that could be sustained by both the self-sustaining roots and by parasitic roots. The vital question is, with the parasitic roots cut off, is there enough remaining source of nourishment to sustain 700 persons to the square mile with the relatively high standard of living which exists in England.

Britain is becoming steadily more aware of the significance of community. Help in financing community center buildings is an established element of public policy. The solidity of British character is evidenced by the fact that out of five hundred such loans, not one has defaulted. Out of two thousand loans for establishing or stabilizing small village industries, only two or three have defaulted. Such organizations as the Women's Rural Institutes reach into the remote corners, adding to the quality of rural life. Scores of private community projects, most of them emphasizing the spiritual qualities of community, have sprung up.

The community center in Britain is a fairly old and well established institution. The Carnegie Trust, founded by Andrew Carnegie many years ago, financed many of them. A wide variety of organizations use them. The government now makes grants to them. In earlier years much national attention was given to community councils. The National Council of Social Service found this too taxing, and now gives its chief attention to county councils, leaving the local councils to survive as they can. Of the 48 counties in Britain, 33 now have such councils. The council members are public officials, plus representatives of organizations. Of their funds, one third come from the central government, a third from the county government, and the remainder from contributions, the Carnegie Trust, and other sources. Each county council employs a secretary, an assistant secretary, a rural industry organizer, and music and drama organizers. The National Council of Social Service helps to organize the county councils.

Government grants do not mean government management. In making a grant for a social center the government requires a satisfactory standard of construction. The local community councils also get help from other government departments.

The rural staff in the London office of the National Council of Social Service numbers about fifteen, and there are eight rural people in the field. There are about one hundred employees altogether in the head office of the National Council of Social Service, which is located at 26 Bedford Square, London.

The Council publishes a booklet, "Community Centers," price 1/6, which includes a brief statement of the philosophy of community organizations,

with suggestions for organizing, financing, staffing and operating councils and centers. It is the best booklet on the subject we have seen. The Council also publishes another pamphlet, "Community Centers: Building Possibilities and Achievements," which describes and illustrates very simple community center buildings.

THE WATLING COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Watling Community Association: The First Twenty-One Years, by E. Sewell Harris and P. N. Molloy (The National Council of Social Service, 26 Bedford Sq., London, W.C. 1, distributors; published by the Watling Community Assn., Orange Hill Rd., Edgware, Middlesex; 62 pp., 3s).

The Watling Housing Estate is one of the largest English public housing developments, completed in 1930 by the London County Council. The great gap between a housing development for low-income Londoners and a community was closed by the people of Watling, working in a new kind of instrument of community organization, the Watling Community Association.

The most unusual feature of the Watling Community Association is that it combines in one organization two different kinds of community council developments as we find them in America. The first is the community council of the type recommended by the New York State Citizens Council, where membership is on the basis of individual interest. Such representation of interested individuals has both strengths and weaknesses—strength through interest of individual participants, weakness through the tendency to become but another civic group competing among such organizations as the Rotarians, the civic club and the chamber of commerce.

The second type of community council in America, such as those developed in California, Ohio, Michigan and Indiana, has its representation on the basis of civic groups, thus uniting and coordinating civic activities—when there is sufficient interest in the work of the council. In Watling these two types of council are combined into one. There is representation on the basis of individual membership as well as of organizations; likewise representation of under-age youth. The success of the Watling Community Association gives evidence of the value of its innovation in community organization.

E. Sewell Harris, the author of the history of the Watling Community Association, is himself a man with unusual insight and understanding in the work of community organization and the work of community centers. His twenty-four years' service as organization secretary for the Watling Association make him a veteran with an unusual fund of experience. His generalizations from that experience must be looked for elsewhere than in this competent history.

—Griscom Morgan

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN IRELAND

by REV. J. M. HAYES, Bansha, County Tipperary, Eire

Recently I stopped at Limerick in Southwestern Eire, and had opportunity to attend a quarterly meeting of the vigorously growing Irish rural life organization, "Muintir na Tire" (People of the Land). I was much impressed with the down-to-earth commonsense attitude and the direct democratic tone of that meeting, and by the evidence of the vitality of the organization. A few weeks later, Rev. J. M. Hayes, founder and head of Muintir na Tire, and his associate, Rev. J. J. Burgin, came to America to attend the annual meeting of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and they were persuaded to attend a meeting of Community Service, Inc., at Yellow Springs. The following account of this organization is extracted from Father Hayes' talks at the N.C.R.L.C. and at Yellow Springs.

—ARTHUR E. MORGAN

Muintir na Tire takes the parish as a unit where men and women of all classes can cooperate to help themselves and to help the community. It endeavors to have the community spirit reborn, and make people realize that they are members of a community and that only a healthy community can guarantee social and economic health to individuals. We decided to begin at the smallest units we could get—the parish, 2000 or 3000, and the home.

The Parish Council considers all in the parish as if they were a family, including all faiths. There are the good and the bad, the strong and the weak, but they are all of the family and all demand the care of the community. It looks around to see what it can do to bring more harmony, peace and prosperity into that parish by means of Christian cooperation to help to improve the lot of each in aiming at improvement in the lot of all.

I want now to tell you how a Parish Guild and Council of Muintir na Tire is formed. First of all a general meeting of all who are willing to cooperate for the common good is called. A good number come—not all by any means, but a good cross-section—representing every class in the parish. It is a loose organization, so that everyone can be in it. We take it for granted that all the people are in it, unless they declare they are out of it—and in Tipperary none has ever declared he is out of it. This body forms the Guild. In it are farmers, labourers, business and professional people, women and youth. In other words, all classes of vocations in the parish find themselves united.

The first duty of this Guild is to select a Council. To ensure that this Council be truly representative, the Guild is divided for the purpose only of

the selection of Council members, into the broad vocational groups of the people of the Parish. In most rural parishes, the callings I have mentioned will include everybody. (In a vocational order men are bound together, not by their price in the market, but by a common vocational interest. In the old guilds, master and servant were in one union.) Each section selects five representatives. These form the Parish Council. Once the Council is formed the whole Council represents the whole parish; the making of sections was for one purpose only—to secure representation for all. Once that is secured, sections vanish and a Parish Council remains to direct as best it can all affairs and interests of the parish for harmony, progress and happiness. So there's your Parish Parliament.

I've been present several times in that parliament called the mother of parliaments, in Westminster. I've been present in the Chamber of Deputies in Paris when I was a student there. I've been present in our own Parliament, called the Dail, in Dublin, and I have never seen in them the dignity that I've seen in the Parish Council or Parliament. I've seen them in Westminster, and I've seen them above all in Paris howling at each other, and sometimes going to blows. I have never seen anything like that in the Parish Parliament.

The Parish Guild, that is the general body, meet three times during the year to advise their Council and hear of its efforts. The Parish Council which we have referred to as the Parish Parliament must meet at least monthly and as often as necessity arises for any particular purpose.

We do not vote on issues, but act only on general agreement. Better not do a thing at all and have unanimity. I'd rather sacrifice better land and better potatoes and have unity. If there is not agreement, put it by, put it by. They'll come to it again.

The work of the Parish Council may be classified under five headings—spiritual, social, educational, economic and recreational. All these play a part in building up the individual. If you neglect some you build an individual that's scarcely human.

Although I have mentioned spiritual under a heading I must emphasize that it enters into every phase of the work. We do not believe in religion and other activities running merely in parallel lines. Religion must be the soul and guiding force of all. A high standard of morals is placed before the people and a healthy public opinion is created to enforce it.

We put social before economic for we realize that economic betterment is no advantage but rather a danger unless a Christian social order is the foundation. The very structure of the movement shows how this social objective is attained. The uniting of all classes in a Guild and Council drives out class war and secures harmony. The Parish Council settles disputes and

acts as a Labour Court for the locality. I may mention that one of the greatest strikes that endangered the beet growing industry some years ago was settled by the National Executive of Muintir na Tire. When you visualize a meeting of a Parish Council and see sitting together farmers, labourers, professional and business people, as well as the women and youth of the Parish, you will realize the strong foundation for social relations in the Parish.

For educational purposes, lectures are given in the local hall on agriculture, woodwork, domestic economy, etc. As well as these, summer schools to which I will refer later, are organized for boys and girls. Better methods of agriculture are shown in the field and on the screen. Every effort is made to give the rural youth a pride in their vocation. In the hall reading rooms are opened and debating societies are started; the latter we call "fireside chats."

Our Parish Councils have acquired agricultural machinery, procured seeds, introduced better stock of cattle, pigs and poultry. They have undertaken drainage, forestry and reclamation schemes. I shall not go into the details of economic work except to explain a method that we hope will revolutionize Irish agriculture; it is the Parish Plan of Muintir na Tire. In Ireland the Department of Agriculture has been too far removed from the people. Our plan brings the Department and all its advantages right down to the Parish. The Department is prepared to give one instructor for every three parishes. The Parish Council organizes the people for this practical instruction. In our Parish Guilds where the plan is in action all stock have been examined for diseases and the necessary remedies have been applied. Every field in the Parish has been tested for its soil and again the necessary remedies are being applied. With the aid of the Department of Agriculture, drainage schemes are in action. The various loans and grants for farm buildings are explained and the forms filled out for applicants. This plan has brought a spirit of friendship between instructor and people.

Our Councils organize the people for rural electrification. In my own rural parish every farm house and worker's cottage has electricity. Nothing has done more to brighten rural life. In the wake of rural electrification is coming the milking machine, the water pump, and labour-saving machinery for the farmyard and the home. Rural industries have been started by Parish Councils. My own Council started a jam factory in a disused mill. It has 23 or 24 employees. It stopped six girls from going to England. Agricultural Shows are organized by many of our Councils and some of these have reached a very high standard.

Recreation, or rather want of it, plays a big part in our rural life. The Parish Councils have built halls and provided playing fields. They provide dancing, drama, concerts and cinema, all of a clean character. Thus a Parish Council of Muintir na Tire caters for the whole life of the people. In Ireland

this is sorely needed. Our people are leaving the land and the nation. We believe our method is the only hope of keeping them.

The Guilds of a locality form a Regional Conference for work that extends beyond the parish and will be of interest to all. This Conference also keeps an eye on the parish bodies so that they may not go to sleep. The next step is a County Conference representing all Guilds in the county. This body deals with local authorities and helps in organizing in its area. The National Executive of Muintir na Tire is elected annually at the Rural Week by a General Council composed of two voting members from each Guild. This Council is the governing body of the movement, and the National Executive carries out its instructions for the year. The National Executive sees after publications, of which we have three: "The Land Mark," published monthly, and "Rural Ireland" and "Fireside Chat," published annually. It also arranges for Rural Weeks and Summer Schools for boys and girls. The Rural Week is the great annual gathering of the movement. Delegates meet for instruction and discussion, and there are lectures by notable speakers on aspects of a special subject. This year it was the Parish Plan. At night there are Irish dances, dramatic entertainments from the Guilds, and above all the Fireside Chat, an open forum for all. All classes and creeds meet as one Christian family.

The National Executive organized two summer schools, one for girls in domestic work and one for boys in agriculture. Most of the students come on scholarships provided by their Guilds. In this way you have many boys and girls in college for ten days, boys and girls who otherwise may never see the inside of a college. There, too, you have the community ideal, for all, drawn from all classes, living like one family.

Our Youth Section of the Parish Guild have of course their representation on the Parish Council. We do not believe in segregating youth. They are a portion of the community life. We realize the necessity of training the youth in the various aspects of agriculture but we believe that with youth, above all, service and sacrifice should find a first place. We divide our youth into local areas with two leaders for each area. As service is first, they pledge themselves to help the community. They go on sick calls for priests or doctors. They must see that nobody in their area is needing the necessities of life. For lone, old people they must till their plots, provide fuel, repair their houses and help in any way possible. Then they proceed to educate themselves by books and pamphlets and lectures. In groups they work to beautify their homes. The care of the village is in their hands. In groups they plant fruit trees. The Parish Map and Register are in their hands. In most cases they form the Parish Band. The Council has a special bank for their savings and an annual holiday is arranged for instruction and pleasure.

Muintir na Tire is not concerned with political parties, present or future; it is not concerned with methods of government. The Irish people are free to choose any method they may desire. But Muintir na Tire aims at building up under any form of government an Irish nation imbued with those Christian and civic virtues, without which nationhood would only be an empty name.

IRISH FABLES OF RURAL LIFE

Father Hayes' visit to Yellow Springs will long be remembered for the stories he told, as well as for his vital and generous personality. Here are some of his stories.

SPLIT PERSONALITY

A young man worked at his city job all day and spent his evenings alone. Finally he asked a psychiatrist, "Will you please give me a split personality?" "Why," the psychiatrist said, "that is what I cure people of. Why do you want a split personality?" "Because I am so lonely by myself," the young man explained.

Some people are so lonely, the only way they can shake hands is with themselves. The real fun in life is knowing people—in the country you do.

FISH OF THE RIGHT SIZE

The fisherman from the city was having indifferent luck, whereas he could see that the young farmer boy a little way along the pier was doing well. Frequently he would catch a fish possibly two feet long, take out a tape measure and measure it, and then throw it back. Then he would keep smaller fish eight or ten inches long. Finally the man had to ask the reason for this strange behavior. "Well, you see," the boy replied, "our frying pan is only ten inches across, and I am keeping the fish that are the right size for it." Thus we would all do well to tackle the things that are of human dimensions.

HANGING TOGETHER

There was a poor soldier that had been in the war, and he'd lost his leg, and his arm, and he'd lost his hair. But he had a false leg and arm, and a wig. One day he was passing by a river, and he fell in. A farmer passing by grabbed him by the leg. The leg came off. Then he took him by the arm, and that came off too. Then he seized him by the hair of his head, and the wig came off. So the farmer put his hands in his pockets, and he looked down at him, and said, "Look here, my good fellow, except you stick together, I can't save you." And that is what we tell the people, except they stick together, we cannot save them.

IRELAND AND DENMARK: A COMPARISON IN RURAL LIFE

One of the difficulties of making comparisons in social studies is that of finding controls for comparison. If we can find cases that are similar in background conditions, then the reasons for points of difference may be sought with fair chance for success. To find cases which in many respects are similar, in one of which rural life thrives while in the other it does not, may throw light on the problem of rural welfare.

Such a comparison may be provided by Denmark and Ireland. They are similar in size and in population. Both have England near by as a potential market. A century ago they were comparable in poverty and ignorance. At that time Ireland was under foreign rule, but Denmark had just emerged from a disastrous foreign war defeated, bankrupt, and with a third of her territory taken away.

With these similarities, the course of rural life in the two countries has been very different. Denmark, without outside help, has increased in population, wealth and education, and in wide distribution of well-being, until today the Danish standard of living is among the highest in the world, while in range of intellectual interest the Danish farmer will compare favorably with those of almost any other land.

From what is now the Irish nation migration has been going on for a century. While the relatively small city population has remained almost stationary during that period, the rural population has shrunk 54%, from more than 6,000,000 in 1841 to less than 3,000,000 in 1941, and that shrinkage continues. Between 1926 and 1941 the number of children under 14 decreased by 53,000, or 6% in 15 years; and this despite the ecclesiastical condemnation of birth control. Formerly emigration was chiefly to America, but now it is chiefly to England and Scotland, lands which already have a denser population. The Irishman migrates because life is not too good at home. The Dane stays at home because life is reasonably good there—he knows no country where it is better.

Father Felim O'Briain, in *Rural Ireland—1949*, organ of Muintir na Tíre, the Irish rural life organization described elsewhere in this issue, makes a comparison of Denmark and Ireland. He writes:

“Our Irish raw materials and our natural sources of wealth are far superior to those of the Danes, and yet the people of Denmark can maintain relatively twice our population at a higher standard of living than the average Irishman enjoys. That country is less than two thirds the size of the 26 counties, and yet her population is 25% greater than ours. While we support

precariouly 112 persons to the square mile, Denmark can maintain in comfort 224. . . . Thirty-seven percent of our men are still unmarried at 49, but only 10% of the Danes remain bachelors up to that age. . . . The soil of Denmark is far less fertile than our own. . . . Denmark, too, is a flat and windswept country, with little or no shelter, with low soil temperature, long and freezing winters and drier summers, with a very uneven rainfall. In comparison we have an equable climate, with an even and abundant rainfall, and a luxuriant growth of grass and tillage crops.

"Denmark has an almost complete lack of mineral wealth—she has no coal or metallic ores for industry, no water power to generate electricity. . . . She has no peat worth mentioning. All the power used in her highly industrialized economy has to be generated from imported materials.

"The Danish standard of living is above ours by any criterion we select. . . . They have ten times our number of telephones, four times our number of wireless sets, and more than twice our motor car strength. Though lacking native power to generate electricity, nearly all their rural homes are electrified. . . . The agricultural output of Denmark, in spite of poorer soil, a far less favorable climate, and other disabilities that could be named, is far greater than ours. . . . In Ireland in prewar days the family remuneration per acre would average only £3, while the Dane received £14 per acre.

"Such intensive agriculture, combined with Denmark's poverty in native industrial raw materials, might lead one to expect little from her industry. But not merely has her industrial output been enormously above ours, but a much larger proportion of her people are occupied in industry than in farming. But she has always linked up her industry with her agriculture, and indeed it grew up on the market of satisfying agricultural and domestic needs. Without protection, and in competition with some of the most highly industrialized countries of the world (Britain, Germany and America), Denmark has been able to supply 80% of her own domestic market needs. In 1936 her gross industrial output was nearly two and a half times that of our own in value. . . .

"Denmark favored small scattered industries, having a far larger proportion of small industries than we possess. Of Danish industrial workers, 55% are occupied in small concerns employing less than 20 persons, while only about 28% of our industrial workers were engaged in similar establishments. Of our industrial workers, 44% were employed in large concerns employing more than 100 persons, while only 25% of Danish workers were occupied in such enterprises."

After his comparison the writer makes suggestions for improving Irish rural life. Among these are better technical education for agriculturists, elimination of middlemen's profits, land holdings for laborers, marriage grants,

bonuses for children, more capital for small farmers, and public playgrounds and parish halls.

Granting that all these may be good, one wonders whether there is not needed a more fundamental change. An inquiry as to what have been the chief factors in determining Irish attitudes and outlooks, with a study of what are the natural effects of such attitudes, might be helpful. For an inquiry to be real, and not just a process of justification of entrenched positions, it must be free from inner compulsion to arrive at or to avoid any particular conclusions. The more deeply entrenched a point of view, the more difficult it is to achieve such freedom.

In America the Danes have displayed no superiority over the Irish in intelligence or in energy. It would seem that the social and economical superiority of Denmark must be accounted for by some cultural factors present in one country and not in the other. This impression is strengthened by the fact that Danish superiority is as great in the range of intellectual interests of the common man as in economic and political policy. There seems to be some cultural factor in Denmark which has brought about these great changes in governmental policy, has largely eliminated special privilege, has had profound influence on education and general culture, has brought about far-reaching land reforms, and has resulted in a vast network of mutual voluntary organization. What is that factor?

Rural Denmark for the last century has been characterized by freedom of inquiry in religious, social and political life. There has been no general submission to an authoritative source of belief and opinion which dispenses with the need for personal inquiry or for independent judgment. Along with this freedom of mind and spirit there was the positive inspiration of men like Grundtvig, which encouraged both intellectual and spiritual growth. Ireland also has had its great leaders, such as "A.E." Russell and Horace Plunkett, but the intellectual and spiritual climate of Ireland did not cause their work to flourish greatly.

The importance of the spirit of free inquiry as a condition necessary to human welfare has not been sufficiently recognized. Its effect within the British Empire can be seen again in a comparison of Australia with Newfoundland. The settlement of Australia began with its use for a penal colony, as a place to unload criminals, though the greater part of the settlers were voluntary immigrants. Australia has had a secular government and education, and the free play of inquiry has given the dominion a place of dignity and self-respect among the nations, with progressive social legislation, recognition of human rights, checks on special privilege, and a level of public morality not inferior to those of most western European countries. Newfoundland was settled by hardy men from Great Britain and Ireland. It

never was a conquered and battle-scarred land. Yet of all British colonies and dominions settled from the British Isles, Newfoundland reached the lowest condition of social backwardness, control by wealth and special interests, political ineptitude and corruption, and final bankruptcy. To what can we attribute this low estate of a British and Irish people?

From early days all general education in Newfoundland has been in the hands of the church, to which the government contributes funds. The Church of England and the Roman Catholic churches have about an equal number of schools, with about a fifth scattered among other denominations. These church schools have been conservative and conventional, with little spirit of free inquiry. They have had the making of the intellectual and moral climate which has ruled Newfoundland.

Newfoundland is a poor, far north country, but so is Finland, which after six centuries of servitude to powerful neighbors, serving as their battleground, only a century ago losing a third of its population by famine after such an experience, has recently achieved freedom. In Finland there is a strong spirit of free inquiry, and in the short period of freedom the poor, war-torn, icebound country has made remarkable advance. If we judge by such achievements as elimination of special privilege, extension of education, development of nation-wide cooperatives, and insurance of human rights, we see that Finland's hard lot has not prevented social advance.

If we list the peoples of the world in the order in which they have achieved freedom of mind and spirit, and also in the order of the degree to which they have achieved human rights, freedom from exploitation, and a high level of culture and material well-being, we shall generally find freedom from authoritarian control of belief and opinion to be associated with a high regard for human rights, and with a strong current of creative effort. On the other hand, where men receive their beliefs and opinions from authoritative sources there generally will be found listlessness of spirit or bitter rebellion, lack of recognition of human rights, and entrenched privilege of wealth and power. Freedom from authoritarian control of belief and opinion is not a luxury. It is a necessary condition to human well-being.

One feels that the Muintir na Tire movement is like a fresh and stimulating breeze blowing across Ireland. Whether the dreams of its devoted leaders are realized, or whether they largely fail in the face of inertia and resistance, may depend in considerable degree on the extent to which a spirit of free, critical inquiry can free men from inherited bonds and stir them to creative effort. There is nothing in the physical makeup of Ireland nor in the inborn capacities of her people to prevent the realization of those dreams, but the road of the pioneer will not be easy.

COMMUNITY IN THE ORKNEY ISLANDS

by ARTHUR E. MORGAN

An account of community activities in the Orkneys may be suggestive as to what can happen in a live but somewhat isolated small population. A little group of treeless and windswept islands north of Scotland, the Orkneys have had a long and interesting history, nearly all of it on the individual home or village level. Recently from the drifted sand along the seashore a stone built village was uncovered which is estimated to be perhaps 5000 years old. The fireplaces in the middle of the rooms were similar to that in one of the oldest primitive cottages still occupied.

Until about 500 A.D. the islands were occupied by the Picts, then by Celts, Scots and Norsemen. As far back as history runs there has been continuity of population, mostly rural. For four hundred years after 100 A.D. the islands were the site of land and naval warfare between Norwegian factions, and between Norwegians and Scots. However, these wars did not seem to affect greatly the course of the native life. The contestants fought and sometimes lived on the islands, but largely as transients, and they seemed not to question the laws and customs of the native population. Sometimes the native leaders acted as peacemakers between warring factions. It seems that this has been a continuous, rather stable group of communities for a thousand years, and probably for much longer. "History," as the record of military action, ended in 1641. Except for contact with two world wars, there has been 400 years of peace.

A description of Orkney life, written just two hundred years ago, is like that of a typical primitive west European village:

"The commonality are healthy, hardy, well shaped, subject to few diseases, and capable of abstemious and laborious life. In sagacity and natural understanding they are inferior to few of the commoners in Britain. They are tenacious of old customs though never so inconvenient, averse to new, till recommended by some successful examples among their own rank and acquaintance, and then universally keen to imitate; honest in their dealings with one another, but not so scrupulous with respect to the master of the ground."

In a history of the islands written about twenty years ago we read:

"What distinguished Orkney from most other places, and what has left its mark down to today, was the lack of opportunity for the intelligent and enterprising to leave the countryside and seek the towns, coupled with the unusual facilities for living in some sort of rude comfort on the land. There was only one small town in the islands, and dangerous seas between the archipelago and all other cities, while the custom of breaking up properties

among the landowning families, and the free condition of the peasantry, covered the country with small farmers, on the whole very well content with their lot. Again, since the first to go to the wall were inevitably the lower strata of the people, these gradually died out: kinsmen, near or remote, of the old storbunder (local land-owning aristocracy) taking their places. The result was, and still is, a remarkably high average of natural intelligence; a reservoir, in fact, of undeveloped ability."

In another article in this issue, the drift toward the city, which has taken place since the introduction of steam navigation, is discussed.

Old habits of community continue. If a farmer is ill, the neighbors take over making the crop. If he dies, the widow and her family are helped until the situation is stabilized. There are other similar evidences of neighborly cooperation. This type of indigenous self-help is being infringed upon by the national welfare legislation of Britain. The islanders resent this shift from local self-reliance to dependence on the state, and vote against it, even though the financial benefits they receive through national support of agriculture are exceptionally large. However, they gradually come under the influence of the national policy, and more and more are exchanging local neighborliness for the benefits of the socialized state. As one form of disregard or protest, they largely ignore the government rationing regulations. As one of them remarked, when he applies for permission to kill a pig for home use, by the time all the red tape has been unwound eight months later the application does not fit the case, because it is no longer a pig that is being dealt with, but a hog.

Nevertheless, government aid is becoming a considerable factor in community organization. The building of community centers and youth centers is made more generally possible by grants and loans from the national government. For the population of 22,000 there are 60 youth centers which own their own meeting places.

Most prominent among the youth organizations is the Boys Brigade, the junior organization for boys of 8 to 12, and the other for those of 12 to 18. These have been in operation for a century. The members attend religious services in uniform on Sunday mornings. The services are conducted by one of the boy officers, with an invited speaker. It is said that brigade boys coming back from the army did not show the moral deterioration which is said to be a common result from that experience. There are also about 30 "youth clubs" for both boys and girls. These meet once a week. They try to get away from organized classroom work, and to maintain an atmosphere of friendly contact, helped by refreshments. Usually they meet not in school-houses but in community centers. Last year £1000 was spent in supplying itinerant teachers. In addition there are Boy Scout and Girl Guide groups

and army cadet clubs (premilitary). On alternate years "Further Education," equivalent to our adult education, sends a delegation of its best boys and girls to the Shetland Islands for a competition. Then the Shetlanders return the visit the following year.

There are 45 community centers with their own buildings, in which weekly meetings are held, attended by more men than women. Usually a leader, supplied by the Education Commission, gives a short talk, and then there is general discussion. The women often have programs of their own.

"Further Education" spends £8000 a year on the general program. Of this amount, 60% comes from the national treasury and 40% from the local government. "Further Education" supplies films to the community centers twice each month. While there is a definite desire for films, this frequency seems to satisfy the demand. The selection of pictures is made by the "Highland and Island Film Guild."

The Women's Rural Institute, which covers all Britain, is a private organization of long standing. It promotes social, cultural, and practical training, including household management and arts and crafts. The 24 branches in the islands have 25 to 115 members each. It has long been a major interest of women on the islands.

There are four Young Farmers' Clubs with widespread membership. They are both educational and recreational. With stock judging, talks by experts, films, and three times a year excursions to other parts of Scotland to see the best in agriculture, they are a considerable factor in improving agricultural practice.

Before the first world war the communities were centered around the church. Everyone was a member, and the church was the chief coordinating agency. Now the community center is to a considerable extent taking its place. We visited a meeting of the St. Andrews Community Council. St. Andrews is a rural parish with no village center. The community center is a wooden building, acquired from the army and moved. It is about 25 by 80 feet, with additions for kitchen and dining rooms for 40 people, and a youth meeting room. The meeting was to discuss the possibilities for a county community center, with meeting place for 1000 people, indoor swimming pool, etc., a prospect for ten years ahead. All those who attended came in autos.

The chief village of the Orkneys is Kirkwall, with about 4000 population. Its community center is an old army building, purchased for £2500 and rebuilt with various additions. It has a room for refreshments; a counter for sweets, soft drinks and sandwiches; an assembly hall to hold 100; a billiard room with three tables; and a variety of small rooms for meetings, play rooms, etc. Ninety-three organizations of the most diverse types use this

center for their meetings. Most of them are agricultural, political, professional, employers, labor, religious, or recreation organizations. There is also a scattering of organizations such as the Camera Club, the Cage Bird Society, Gaelic Society, Orkney County Music Committee, Choral Union, County Orchestra, Orkney Flying Club, Scottish Community Drama Association, Welcome Home Committee, Arts Club, and the "Talk Exchange."

The Orkney County Library, founded in 1683, has about 30,000 volumes. There are 80 branch libraries. Boxes with about 100 books are sent regularly by boat, truck, etc. The boxes contain 60% fiction and 40% other books.

What is the effect of this seeming plethora of local organization? The Orkneys, with relatively few natural resources, constitute perhaps the most prosperous corner of the British Isles. The small farms, averaging about forty acres, are largely mechanized. Small Ferguson tractors are most common. Milking machines are commonly used in the dairies. Farm buildings are substantial. Plans have been prepared for a water supply system to pipe water over the entire largest island, making it available to each farmhouse. (Unlike most of Europe, Orkney farmers do not live in villages, but on the land.)

Farm cooperatives have had considerable development. For instance, the egg cooperative (eggs being chiefly produced by the farmers' wives) shipped 2,500,000 dozen eggs in 1948, about three fourths of the total egg export. Consumers cooperatives are but slightly in evidence.

The leaders of thought are deeply concerned over the drift to the cities. Some of the programs described are efforts to counteract that trend. Though the problem is not solved, apparently some headway is being made. In recent years there has been a slight gain in total population. The variety of interests and activities in this small population of 22,000 is in striking contrast to life in many rural areas of America. Perhaps further progress could be made toward maintaining the quality of the population by a somewhat reflective study of all the chief factors which enter into human satisfaction, and of the steps which might be taken to meet the remaining unfilled vital human needs. One of the chief remaining needs is for small, decentralized industries using modern technology. These are needed to give greater variety to vocational opportunity, to absorb the population displaced by mechanization of agriculture, and to add to the total income and thereby to the standard of living. Another need, especially on the smaller islands, is for greater variety in the choice of mates, and decrease of inbreeding. For instance, on North Ronaldsay Island there are 80 registered voters by the name of Tulloch out of a total population of 250. Another need is for escape from isolation and for increased range of experience. In return, young people from outside might spend similar time on the islands. Careful thought and planning might make more successful the effort to maintain the fine quality of Orkney people.

THE PROSPECTS FOR RURAL INDIA

by ARTHUR E. MORGAN

Of the 700,000 villages of India and Pakistan about 80% are in India. They range from little hamlets of one or two hundred people to a population of about 10,000. Beyond that size they are usually known as towns. A trading or railroad or industrial community of two or three thousand might be called a town, whereas a community of farmers of 10,000 population might be called a village. Except along the southwest coast of India and in a few other localities, farmers do not live on the land they till, but are grouped in compact villages. Each village includes a definite surrounding area which is owned by individual farmers or by landlords. The landlord may be an individual or a Hindu temple.

The average population of an Indian village is about five hundred fifty. In large parts of the fertile Ganges plain, which holds half of the Indian population in one fifth of the country, the population is so dense that there are two or three villages to the square mile. Here the average family holding is about one and a half acres. About 90% of the crops are consumed at home, the remainder being sold for town and city use.

Villages differ greatly over India. While most houses are built of mud—the “adobe” of our southwestern states—along the southwest coast there is a cocoanut economy, where a large part of the food, clothing and most housing, furniture, fencing and utensils are from cocoanut trees. A usual Indian village is a compact cluster of mud houses of one, two, or three rooms, along crooked lanes ten to thirty feet wide.

In the article in the January-February issue of *Community Service News* on the metropolitan community, attention is drawn to the complex interrelationships of an industrialized nation. Indian villages have few such relationships. They are distributed over the land wherever the soil, fisheries, forests or mining will support a population. There is relatively little relation to large towns or cities. From every village there are footpaths, and sometimes cart tracks to the neighboring villages. Until recently nearly everything used in the villages was made there, except the small amount of iron or brass used in the few metal implements and utensils.

The villager has paid a constant tribute to the city in the form of taxes, rent to landlords, and in various protective payments to grasping and parasitic officials. Everything but bare subsistence was taken from him. There is striking contrast between the mud huts of the villager and laborer and the palaces of the rich.

Notwithstanding his hard life, the villager had a certain kind of stability. He had learned how to survive under difficult circumstances. He had faced a hard world, and had not been defeated. He was quite generally intelligent and of sound character. Never having known a better life, he felt at home.

Such has been the state of the Indian villager. Now comes political freedom, democratic, adult franchise, and a new world of technology. Under these conditions, what will be the fate of the villages?

Several different solutions are proposed. The typical conventional industrialist would enlarge industry, expand cities, advance technology, and let nature take its course. The village is obsolete, fit only for those who cannot stand the pace of modern life. This policy is not so boldly stated, but is implicit in industrial policy. The ghastly, stinking, crowded chawls (slums) of Indian cities, where the average dweller has a total of only twenty-four square feet of living space, is the fruit of this policy. Let half of India's population live in cities, instead of the present ten or fifteen percent, and proletarian revolution would be assured.

Another solution is that ardently promoted by some followers of Gandhi, who outdo him in the cult of primitiveness. They oppose industrialization. At their chief village life training center at Wardha we saw paper being made by primitive methods which required probably more than a hundred times as many man-hours as are needed in modern industry. Pumping water for irrigation by primitive methods requires one or two hundred times as many man-hours for a given result as are necessary by modern pumping methods. Spinning by hand requires twenty times as many man-hours as a spinning machine, and the hand-spun yarn is inferior. Weaving by hand loom is far more promising, though the addition of power to the loom will double or triple the output of the identical product. There are many gradations of this theory of primitiveness. Gandhi approved sewing machines and electric power. Most of those leaders who oppose industrialization travel by train, use the telephone, and in their ranging work have a satisfying variety of cultural contacts which would largely be denied to villagers under their programs. A fair statement of the anti-industrialists' attitude might be that they do not oppose industrialization, per se, but want it to come only in case the man is master of the machine and not its servant, only if all the people may have its benefits, and only when and as the people's tastes and morals will not be deteriorated. Actual opposition to industrialization is the expression of a variety of social philosophies. In our opinion, effort to withhold industrialization and its products from the villages will hasten both flight from village to city, and mass industrialization.

Another solution, which at present is gaining much interest and approval in India, is that of the Japanese industrial village. Large corporations farm

out industrial processes to small village or household industries. When farm work is done the hard-pressed villagers work at very low wages to add to their meager income. Economic control is in the distant city. This process of economic feudalism, which has helped to make Japan a powerful competitor in world markets, appeals to a certain type of Indian industrial mind.

In our opinion a good solution of the problem of the Indian village can be found only as the expression of an over-all social philosophy. Some elements of such a social philosophy would be:

1. Recognition of the vital part which primary-group community life plays in the development and stabilizing of society and in meeting deep human needs; and a program of maintaining the Indian village as a main element of Indian social life. There should be a picture of the village as a social organism, continuing through the generations, and developing its own personality.

2. A new picture of the village, not as just the abode of farmers with narrow outlooks and few contacts, but as a cross-section of full cultural and economic life, with agriculture, industry, and various services giving range of satisfactions of economic need and varied opportunity for work.

3. Decentralized industry, so far as decentralization can be made technically feasible and socially desirable.

4. A broad, ranging educational program, ethical, social, cultural, and vocational, passing on to the villager the best of the world's spiritual, intellectual, cultural and economic inheritance.

5. The development of a spirit of free critical inquiry and a spirit of exploration, research and pioneering, so that the village may be, not just a place to sustain life, but a place of inquiry, adventure and pioneering.

6. Social, intellectual and economic intercourse with other villages and with the wider world, so that the village shall not be a place of insularity.

Nothing short of such a program will give the Indian village the cultural and economic stability which will make it a satisfactory home for men of quality, and enable it to make its full possible contribution to human society. Such a picture of the Indian village is slowly emerging. Time presses, and there is danger that, as a way to quickly meet expanding economic needs, a pattern of giant mass industry will be fixed upon India. That seems to be the present major tendency.

"An Experimental Group in the Danish Folkschool Movement," 278 Farmington Ave., Hartford 5, Conn., announces plans for taking twenty students to Denmark in September to study at four Danish folk schools. Those interested in the group should write for the reports issued by the current study group of ten students in Denmark this year.

COLLEGE-COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

At a meeting on college-community programs at Cincinnati on January 9, a number of them were described. The following is from a news letter issued for the group by E. L. Kirkpatrick, of Marietta College, Marietta, Ohio.

"Among the several projects that were reviewed and discussed at considerable length was the Community Dynamics Seminar, reported on by William Biddle and his coworkers from Earlham College. This includes eight projects, one of which is in a small suburb, another in a small industrial farming center, a third in an across-the-tracks section of a city, and a fourth with a County Planning Commission. Two are work camps in Cuba and Jamaica. While service to the community is a significant part of these projects, educational aspects are paramount—'experience (for the students) working with people in real life gives vitality to education.'

"A somewhat similar plan is in operation at Marietta College. There, the projects include exploration of several small town communities with attention to forums and panel discussions, and exchange of experiences between college students and local young people in planning and conducting vital recreation activities. In these efforts, the primary objective is educational; that is, to help students get the know-how. Almost as important, though, is the service extended to the community in stimulating people to improve their own situations.

"Intentions to start an informal rural life training program among certain key colleges of the National Lutheran Conference were described by Rev. E. W. Mueller of the National Lutheran Council. For example, the several Lutheran colleges will plan and conduct informal rural short courses or training institutes of varying types. One will be a two-year rural life course for young people who may look to farming or living in small towns; another, a winter course for those already established in farming; another, a shorter and more intensive training session, and so on. These programs, so far as possible, will partake of the nature and significance of the Danish folk and/or agricultural school. A planning workshop looking toward this project was held at Augustana College in Rock Island, last August.

"Satisfactory and promising working relations between college and town, looking toward the establishment of a community recreation area and play center on the campus, were described by Tom Shearer, president of Parsons College, Fairfield, Iowa. 'By combining our efforts and objectives,' said Shearer, 'it looks as if we may get what neither has been able to have singly. Equally important, though, is the advantage this project will afford in way of experience for the student from being a part of and trying to serve in a real community.'"

REVIEWS

City or Community: Patterns of Community Organisation in Urban Areas, with Special Reference to Citizen Participation. A Report for the National Federation of Settlements of America, by Elizabeth Handasyde. Publications Department, National Council of Social Service, Inc., 32 Gordon Square, London W.C.1., 103 pages.

We have the National Federation of Settlements to thank for this opportunity "to see ourselves as others see us." The "other," in this case, is an intelligent, discriminating English woman who spent nearly seven months in this country during 1947-8. Though most of her time was spent examining settlements and other social work agencies, she is most deeply concerned with the broader problems of community organization. In discussing this emerging, characteristically American profession she inevitably makes numerous shrewd but not unkind comments upon "ourselves."

The author rapidly steps beyond the confines of a narrow social work bias. She vigorously condemns the attitudes of the professional "do-gooder," too often to be found in welfare agencies. Rather her purpose is to seek evidence of growth in local autonomy in citizen participation. The difficulties involved are only too apparent:

"In the United States the difficulty of securing a reasonable degree of citizen participation is likely to be particularly acute. I have already referred to the elements in American character and habits which hinder the development of a strong community sense; but apart from the mobility, both social and geographical, which keeps the average citizen from fully identifying himself with his neighborhood or feeling a sense of responsibility for it, there is what Geoffrey Gorer describes as the passivity of the American citizen to be taken into account. Gorer sees in this passivity and apathy the greatest threat to American democracy." (Page 70.)

Her observations cover a wide gamut, from organization of welfare agencies, to block and neighborhood and area councils, from peaceful adjuncts to municipal governmental reform to conflict organizations, from rural to urban councils. She notes the difficulty of obtaining participation from less prominent citizens and challenges the tendency to rely upon "natural leaders." But she is willing to be optimistic about each extension of democratic responsibility. Not even the community organizer comes out of her commentary unscathed. He has his limitations set in part by his professional qualifications.

"This distinction between the actual performance of a social service and the process of procuring it to be performed is expressed by describing the community organizer as 'an enabler.' He combines as it were the functions

of planning consultant and of plumber's mate—the two facets of his job being its initiation (and possibly its termination) on the one hand and on the other a long continuing process of suggestion and facilitation during which he must be content to furnish the tools with which the community itself, acting through organized groups, must finish or botch the job."

"It must not be forgotten that all community organization is a second-best, an artificial substitute for the organic processes of a natural community, and that the undue multiplication of its procedures harms the true spirit of community more than it helps it. The ideal solution for such a neighbourhood may be to have someone with the skills of the community organizer who is himself, in his own right, a part of the community and who can take the lead in a spontaneous movement of coordination." (Page 91.)

Even those Americans who are well informed with regard to community developments will find Handasyde's resume well worth the reading, particularly to benefit by her balanced and informed commentary. The differences she finds between British and American experience with community organization she relates to differences between the cultures of the two nations. She does recognize, however, that the development of greater citizen participation is common to both nations, that community organizers may contribute to greater democracy but may do the opposite if not conscious of their own limitations.—William W. Biddle, Director, Program of Community Dynamics, Earlham College.

Gemeindefreiheit als Rettung Europas, by Adolf Gasser (Verlag "Bücherfreunde," Basel, Switzerland, 1947, 266 pages).

Democracy can survive only where local government and local responsibility have had vigorous life. At the close of the first world war democratic forms of government were established over most of Europe. Wherever there was a long history of decentralized local self-government, there democracy was maintained. Wherever the processes of feudalism and decentralization had smothered self-government, so that people habitually looked to the center for authority and guidance, there democracy failed. In spite of war centralization, democracy survived in Switzerland, Holland, Scandinavia and England. In spite of democratic forms it failed in Germany, Italy, the Balkans, Spain, Portugal, and to a considerable degree in France. Direction of its own affairs by the local community is the essential educational process of democracy.

This is the theme of Adolf Gasser. He ranges over ancient, medieval and modern history for his examples, and has many penetrating comments along the way. It is to be hoped that an English translation of the book may be forthcoming.

New Quarterly Issue of *Interpreter*

The following is quoted from an announcement received from Mrs. Loomis:

"For five years, *The Interpreter*, edited by Ralph Borsodi and Mrs. Mildred Loomis from the latter's home, Lane's End Homestead, Brookville, Ohio, has been issued semimonthly with comments on current events from the viewpoint of normal living. The concept of normal living has been a gradual formulation from Mr. Borsodi's search to discover a valid standard by which to judge changes introduced by the rapid development of the physical sciences and industrial technology. In 1934 he established the School of Living at Suffern, N.Y., to aid in the research to clarify the idea of normal living and the nature and extent of decentralization requisite to it.

"From this background *The Interpreter* evaluates what is happening today in farming, business, education, health, art. It recognizes the complexity of life and living, but basic to it is the fact that the individual is a fractional organism who can only complete himself in the family, and that country life and the local community are essential to the normalizing life, i.e., creating an environment suitable to the human being.

"In 1950, *The Interpreter* will include four 32-page, illustrated *Normal Living Quarterlies*, describing achievements in normal living, productive homes, intentional communities, economic independence, political freedom, functional art, health through natural methods, and decentralist accomplishments of many kinds.

"Education in the principles and practices of normal living goes on through seminars on the problems of living by Mr. Borsodi; through establishments of local and regional adult Schools of Living under the direction of Frank Larson, Bloomington, Illinois; and through the publication and research at the original Suffern School of Living, now established in Mr. Borsodi's homestead."

Oklahoma A and M College announces two "Workshops on Wheels" from June 5 to July 31. One of these will be to the eight southeastern states—Arkansas, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. The second is to the six midwestern states—Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Missouri. Each "workshop" is limited to 20. The first three weeks will be spent on the campus in study and preparation, the next three weeks on tour, and the last two weeks on the campus for evaluation and report. The program is planned by the Community Development Program Committee, N. Conger, Chairman. Applications should be sent to C. B. Loomis, Quonset 22-20, A and M College, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM
THE NETHERLANDS

(Continued from page 34.)

ciologists, demologists, welfare officers, etc. A report has been published, "The future of the city, the city of the future"; it would be of interest to you. In this report they are working along the lines of this idea of quarters, parts of the city autonomous to a certain extent, especially in the fields of cultural organization.

In our experience, therefore, you may overcome the disadvantages of the city, certain disadvantages at any rate, by decentralization, bringing the responsibility down to as low a level as possible.

This is, however, only part of the picture, and in my opinion the smaller part. Urbanization is bad, but industrialization—at any rate, the way we are doing it at present—is worse. For even in smaller communities, out in the country, as soon as the rural agricultural worker becomes industrialized, even in small but modern plants, we find the same disintegrating tendency as in the city. I am touching here on certain phenomena I found little about in your publications.

Our attitude toward "work" is changing, at any rate in Europe. We are doing always more "labor" and less "work"—taking labor as the painful, trying, arduous, toiling form. Work has a touch in it of creative work. You will find this distinction in almost every language — French, "travail," "oeuvre"; German, "Arbeit," "Werk"; English, "labor," "work." Similarly in the Dutch and Scandinavian idiom; also in the classics. In old Hebrew "labor" is synonymous with pain, sorrow. I could deal long with this sub-

ject, but the formative character of work is changing to destructive influence of labor. The general assumption is to believe that if something is wrong with your work you can fully make up for that in your leisure time. There is of course a fair possibility of compensation, but as long as we don't change our attitude toward work, we won't make it better. Instead of developing a full human personality, we see a form of mental atrophy and show-maturity.

But even worse is the influence on family life. With rural families—this applies to farmers as well as to craftsmen—the family is a community who not only live together but also work together. There is common interest and common knowledge of their way of life.

Modern industry and school education destroys this work-community. The housewife, the mother, has not the slightest idea about what her husband and children are doing in shop or school. Industrial workers are living a double or triple life—one at home with the family, one at the shop, at the workbench or desk, and one in their leisure time, in hobbies, organizations, etc. This dualism is dangerous and disintegrating. Under such circumstances you won't find harmonious development of the human personality, and there will be no correlation between work and leisure. Harmonious, full-grown adults work in a leisurely way and are working in their leisure time. Now they take the other way, they work in a permanent tension and in their leisure time they take the easy road, passive and lazy.

This applies to all kinds of vital activities—physical education becomes sport (50,000 excited people looking at

22 boys), plays and theater become cinema, music-making and dancing become radio, etc., enough to fill a book. But we are faced with these problems, we have to cope with them, one way or another. People like that are not interested in social life, and all efforts to make them accept their responsibility as citizens are in vain. The roots of this evil are indeed in our daily work and the way we look at our work, and consequently how the family lives as the nucleus of social life, in the city as well as out in the country.

It struck me in your publications

that these observations are confirmed in your report of the Surashtras. They maintained their city population as long as the family was at the same time a "working" unit, women doing auxiliary work for their husbands. As soon as this basic unit as such was destroyed, you got all the difficulties of urban life.

Once again, thanks for your publications. I am very much interested in your aims and purposes. You are doing a good job indeed.

—L. Meilink, Huizen,
The Netherlands

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

March 8-10. Annual conference, Council of Southern Mountain Workers, Gatlinburg, Tenn. For information write C.S.M.W., 8½ Wall St., Asheville, N.C.

March 16-17. Third Annual Conference on Adult Education, Indiana University Memorial Union Bldg., Bloomington, Ind. Sponsored by Purdue and Indiana Universities. "How to Put Over an Adult Education Program in Your Organization or Community. . . Many Valuable Attendance Prizes."

March 16-18. Annual Conference, Rural Life Assn., Bluffton, Ohio. Theme, "Building the Community." Secretary of Agriculture Brannan guest speaker. Write R.L.A., Quaker Hill, Richmond, Ind., for information.

March 23-25. Fourteenth Annual Recreation Conference, Univ. of Mass., Amherst. Sections on crafts, folk festival, nature, sports, hosteling.

April 13-15. North American Conference on the Community, Deshler-Wallick Hotel, Columbus, Ohio. Sponsored by American Council for the Community, Suite 3317, 60 E. 42nd St., New York 17.

May 4-6. Am. Assn. for Adult Education, 25th Annual Meeting, Hotel Hollenden, Cleveland, Ohio. Write hotel for reservations.

May 22-26. Training Conference for Ministers and Directors of Religious Education, Camp Akita, 50 miles from Columbus, Ohio. Theme "The Full-Guidance Church." Program includes church's responsibility for achieving teamwork of all agencies in the community. Write First Community Church,

1320 Cambridge Blvd., Columbus 12.

June 6-9. Stillwater, Okla., conference sponsored by Foundation for Integrated Education and Oklahoma A and M College; general chairman F. S. C. Northrop. Apply to Foundation headquarters, 60 E. 42nd St., New York 17.

June 15-18. Sixth Annual Institute of Community Leadership, Colgate University, Hamilton, N.Y. Write New York State Citizens Council, 601 E. Genesee St., Syracuse, N.Y.

June 18-July 1. National Cooperative School for Group Organization and Recreation, Mission House College, Plymouth, Wisconsin. Courses in theory, art, music, puppetry, dancing, dramatics, games. Write Ellen Linson, Box 57, Greenbelt, Md.

June 25-July 14. National Training Laboratory in Group Development, Fourth Session, Bethel, Maine. Write N.T.L.G.D., 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

June 30-July 2. Seventh Annual Conference on the Small Community, Yellow Springs, Ohio. See announcement on back cover.

July 23-30. Recreation Institute, Danebod Folk School, Tyler, Minn.

August 5-26. Third Annual Summer Session, the Grundtvig Folk School. Theme "A Mid-Century Perspective." Seminar in history and life sciences. Special features nature hikes, sketch classes, folk singing. Living expenses about \$5 a week, camping facilities abundant. For information write headquarters at Box 218a, Route 1, Eagle Creek, Oregon.

SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON THE SMALL COMMUNITY

Yellow Springs, Ohio — June 30-July 2, 1950

THE PATTERN OF THE NEW COMMUNITY

This issue of *Community Service News* illustrates changes taking place in primary-group communities the world over. They are occurring largely by a process of drift, without conscious pattern or purpose. That has been the process by which great civilizations have risen, but it is also the process by which they have reached premature decay or death.

We know what the primary-group community has been in the past. What is to be its future form and function in a technological world? How can its vital elements be preserved and adapted to the conditions of tomorrow? What characteristics of the old community are so essential to human well-being that they must be preserved, and what new elements, perhaps taken from urban life, must be added to give them quality and survival power? Without regimentation of thought or program, can we achieve common understanding and a common vision of the new community, which will be continuously adaptive to a rapidly evolving society? What will such planning mean in community economics, religion, cultural life, education and recreation?

The May-June issue of *Community Service News* will be devoted partly to articles dealing with this theme of the conference, to furnish background for it. A fuller outline of the conference will appear in that issue.

Community Service News, issued bimonthly except July and August by Community Service, Inc., Yellow Springs, Ohio, \$1.50 per year, two years \$2.50. Griscom Morgan, editor.

Community Service, Inc., is an organization to promote the interests of the community as a basic social institution, concerned with the economic, recreational, educational, cultural and spiritual development of its members. Community Service was incorporated in 1940 as a non-profit organization to supply information and service for small communities and their leaders, in the belief that the decay of the American community constitutes a crisis which calls for steady and creative effort. The nation-wide interest expressed during the succeeding years has reinforced this opinion.